

House
REPUBLICAN
Conference

FloorPrep

Legislative Digest

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

John Boehner
Chairman
8th District, Ohio

*House Meets at 12:30 p.m. for Morning Hour and
2:00 p.m. for Legislative Business
(No Votes Before 5:00 p.m.)*

Anticipated Floor Action:

- H.R. 429—NATO Special Immigrant Amendments Act**
**H.R. 3116—Examination Parity and Year 2000 Readiness for Financial
Institutions Act**
**H.Res. ____—A Resolution Regarding the Agricultural Research, Extension, and
Education Reauthorization Act**
H.R. 3120—Designating the Howard C. Nielson Post Office Building
H.R. 2766—Designating the Karl Bernal Post Office Building
S. 916—Designating the Blaine H. Eaton Post Office Building
H.R. 2836—Designating the Eugene J. McCarthy Post Office Building
H.R. 2773—Designating the Daniel J. Doffyn Post Office Building
S. 985—Designating the Larry Doby Post Office Building
**H.R. 424—Increasing the Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Possessing a
Firearm While Committing a Crime**

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Bills Considered Under Suspension of the Rules

Floor Situation: The House will consider the following 10 bills under suspension of the rules as its first order of business today. Each is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

H.R. 429—NATO Special Immigrant Amendments amends the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act by adding the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to the list of organizations of which certain employees and their family members may become eligible for “special immigrant” visas. The bill makes civilian employees of NATO and their immediate families eligible for these

visas on the same terms as are officers and employees (and their immediate families) of currently qualifying international organizations. Employees of NATO and their families currently can apply for temporary visas, which expire when their work in the United States is complete. Such visas are not renewable and, upon expiration, visa holders must leave the country. H.R. 429 enables those who wish to live in the United States after their employment with NATO to do so, since, as “special immigrants,” they would have permanent visas. CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill was introduced by Mr. Pickett and was reported by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote on October 29, 1997.

H.R. 3116—Examination Parity and Year 2000 Readiness for Financial Institutions requires all five of the federal financial regulatory agencies—the Federal Reserve Board, the Office of the Comptroller of Currency (OCC), the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS), and the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA)—to hold seminars for financial institutions on the implications of the Year 2000 computer problem and provide model approaches for solving the problem. The bill gives statutory parity to OTS and NCUA by extending to these two agencies the same authority the other three agencies have to examine and regulate providers of computer data processing and other services of financial institutions. The bill sunsets the NCUA’s authority after 2001. CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill does not affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply. The bill was introduced by Mr. Leach on January 28, 1998, and the Banking & Financial Services Committee ordered the bill by voice vote on February 5, 1998.

H.Res. ____—A Resolution Regarding the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reauthorization Act calls up S. 1150, the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reauthorization Act, strikes the Senate language and replaces it with the House-passed version of the measure, H.R. 2534. The resolution also approves, upon passage, a motion to go to conference to resolve House-Senate differences over the measure.

H.R. 2534 reauthorizes and reforms existing agricultural research, extension, and education programs through FY 2002. Specifically, the bill (1) improves overall coordination of all federally-supported agricultural research; (2) increases user input by requiring the Agriculture Secretary to consult with (and solicit recommendations from) the appropriate advisory board and persons who use or conduct agricultural research when establishing priorities for federally-funded research, extension, and education activities; (3) subjects all federal research, extension, and education programs to scientific and merit peer-review; (4) clarifies that state universities must match any federal funds with an equal amount of non-federal funds to ensure consistency between research and education programs (with certain exceptions); (5) authorizes new competitive research grant programs in plant and animal genetics, precision agriculture, organic agriculture, new biobased industrial products, and crop diversification; and (6) seeks to ensure that federal funds be managed to maximize the impact of federal investment by coordinating and integrating research, extension, and education projects and programs, minimizing unnecessary duplication, and fostering appropriate partnerships with other institutions and organizations to solve specific problems.

Assuming appropriations of the estimated amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2534 will result in \$14.7 billion in discretionary outlays over the FY 1998-2002 period. The bill affects direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures apply. CBO estimates that the bill will increase direct spending by \$115,000 per year. The bill was introduced by Mr. Combest; the Agriculture Committee reported the bill by voice vote on October 29, 1997. The House passed H.R. 2534 by a vote of

291-125 on November 8, 1997. The Senate passed its version of the bill, S. 1150 (*S.Rept. 105-73*), by unanimous consent on October 29.

H.R. 3120 names the federal post office building located at 95 West 100 South Street in Provo, Utah, after Howard C. Nielson. In 1983, Mr. Nielson was elected to the newly created Third Congressional District of Utah, where he served for eight years. He was a member of the Commerce and Government Operations Committees. He was active on issues regarding trade, natural resources, deregulating the broadcast, telephone, and natural gas industries, as well as the commercial interests of the motion picture industry and Wall Street. After retiring from politics, Mr. Nielson and his wife served as missionaries for the Church of the Latter-Day Saints in Australia. The bill was introduced by Mr. Cannon and was reported by the Government Reform & Oversight Committee by voice vote.

H.R. 2766 names the federal post office building located at 215 East Jackson Street in Painesville, Ohio, after Karl Bernal. Mr. Bernal was an advocate for his home town area in Painesville until his death last year. He was active in numerous civic organizations such as the Lake County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Lake County Salvation Army, the Lake County United Way, and the Painesville Area Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Bernal received numerous honors that attest to the fact that he will be remembered in his community as possibly one of the most influential persons in Lake County. The bill was introduced by Mr. LaTourette and was reported by the Government Reform & Oversight Committee by voice vote.

S. 916 names the federal post office building located at 750 Highway 28 East in Taylorsville, Mississippi, after Blaine H. Eaton. After serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II from 1944 to 1946, Mr. Eaton returned home and was elected to serve in the Mississippi State House of Representatives where he served Smith County for 12 years. As the chairman of the Mississippi House Highway and Highway Finance Committee, he was responsible for the passage of the Farm-to-Market legislation that is still benefiting Mississippi today as the State Aid Road Program. After leaving public office, Mr. Eaton managed the Southern Pine Electric Power Association. After retiring from his career and until his death in 1995, he remained active in community service through the Lions International, the Hiram Masonic Lodge, the Southeast Mississippi Livestock Association, the Economic Development Foundation, and the First Baptist Church of Taylorsville. The bill was introduced by Senator Cochran and passed the Senate by unanimous consent on October 21, 1998.

H.R. 2836 names the federal post office building located at 180 East Kellogg Boulevard in Saint Paul, Minnesota, after Eugene J. McCarthy. In 1948, Mr. McCarthy was elected to Congress from the 4th District of Minnesota, where he served for 10 years before being elected to the U.S. Senate where he served two terms. In 1968, Mr. McCarthy gained national prominence when he ran for president as the first candidate to take a stance against the Vietnam War. While calling for an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops in Vietnam, Mr. McCarthy received an astonishing 42 percent of the vote in the Democratic presidential primary in New Hampshire in 1968. Mr. McCarthy later withdrew from the race, leaving Vice President Hubert Humphrey to run against Richard Nixon. After leaving politics, Mr. McCarthy taught in the public school system in Minnesota and has served as a professor at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. He is also a distinguished author of numerous books, including children's literature, history, and poetry. The bill was introduced by Mr. Vento and was reported by the Government Reform & Oversight Committee by voice vote.

H.R. 2773 names the federal post office building located at 3750 North Kedzie Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, after Daniel J. Doffyn. In March 1995, Daniel Doffyn was killed in the line of duty when he responded to a gang-related robbery. He is remembered by his family, community, and the city of Chicago as a man who was a good parent, good neighbor, and a good policeman. The bill was introduced by Mr. Blagojevich and was reported by the Government Reform & Oversight Committee by voice vote.

S. 985 names the federal post office building located at 194 Ward Street in Patterson, New Jersey, after Larry Doby. In 1947, Larry Doby became the first African American to play baseball in the American League. Born in Camden, South Carolina, and raised in Patterson, New Jersey, Doby enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II. After the war, he returned home to play for the Negro League Newark Eagles. He was the leading player in the Negro National League, with a batting average of .458 and 13 home runs, when the owner of the Cleveland Indians signed him to a contract on July 5, 1947. During the 1948 season, he became the first African American to play on a World Series Champion team. Doby played 13 seasons in the majors with the Cleveland Indians, Chicago White Sox, and Detroit Tigers, hitting a career average of .283 with 253 home runs. The bill was introduced by Senator Torricelli and passed the Senate by unanimous consent on October 9, 1997.

H.R. 424—Increasing the Mandatory Minimum Penalty for Possessing a Firearm While Committing a Crime amends section 924(c) of Title 18 of the U.S. Code to provide increased imprisonment when a person is convicted of a crime which involved possessing, brandishing, or using a firearm. The bill specifically changes current language which states that additional penalties must be imposed if a person “uses or carries” a firearm during a federally-punishable criminal act or a drug trafficking crime. As currently written, federal law also imposes mandatory five- or 10-year sentences for first-offenses depending on the type of firearm involved in the criminal event, and 20-year-to-life sentences for subsequent offenses. H.R. 424 changes this approach, adding to the amount of jail time imposed for first-time offenses based on *how* the firearm was used rather than its type. Specifically, the bill imposes an additional (1) 10-year jail sentence for *possessing* a firearm during the commission of a crime; (2) 15-year jail sentence for *brandishing* a firearm in such a way that the gun aids the criminal act; and (3) 20-year sentence for *discharging* the gun during a crime. The bill provides 20, 25, and 30-year sentences for second and subsequent offenses. H.R. 424 also provides increased penalties if the gun used during a crime was a machine gun or is specially equipped with a firearm silencer or muffler; in such cases, first-offense penalties receive an additional 30-year prison sentence (subsequent offenses call for life imprisonment). Finally, H.R. 424 prohibits courts from imposing probationary sentences for any of the above offenses, and stipulates that no prison term imposed under this statute may run concurrently with any other term of imprisonment. CBO estimates that enactment will result in \$10 million over five years. H.R. 424 was introduced by Mrs. Myrick, *et al.* and was reported by the Judiciary Committee by a vote of 17-8 on September 9, 1997.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVII, #3, February 20, 1998.

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Amendment

Alert!

Please attach the text of the amendment (if available) and fax to the *Legislative Digest* at x5-7298

John Boehner
Chairman
8th District, Ohio

Member Sponsoring Amendment: _____ Bill #: _____

Additional Co-sponsors (if any): _____

Staff Contact: _____ Phone #: _____ Evening Phone #: _____

Description of the amendment: _____

(Please include any additional or contextual information)

Reason for offering amendment (e.g., How will this change the bill or current law? Why should members support this change?): _____

